

Mr. KING. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. FOSSELLA. I yield to the gentleman from New York.

Mr. KING. Mr. Speaker, I just want to take this opportunity to commend the gentleman from New York for the outstanding job he has done in bringing this issue to the American people and continuing the fight and not backing down at all. The gentleman deserves the credit of all of us, and I just commend the gentleman for the great job he has done.

Mr. FOSSELLA. Mr. Speaker, reclaiming my time, I just want to thank my good friend, the gentleman from New York (Mr. KING), because he has been right by my side in fighting for what I believe is justice here, especially for the victims.

The important point, Mr. Speaker, is that these people who still to this day offer no remorse, no apologies to the victims, not even a call; I doubt very much if the White House or the Attorney General's Office has even called Diana Berger who lost her husband, or Joseph and Thomas Connor who lost their father or the Richard Pastorell who lost his sight or Anthony Semft who lost his vision or Rocko Pasceralla, a police officer who lost his leg. I doubt very much if they have even gotten a phone call and, meanwhile, we have terrorists out on the street who feel committed to engage in a reign of terror against this Nation. It is ridiculous, and I think the American people deserve to know some answers.

THE INTERNET—AVOIDING MONOPOLY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. BACHUS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. BACHUS. Mr. Speaker, at the very time that we need to increase competition in the delivery of Internet services, I am afraid that the unregulated nature of the Internet is in danger of being compromised.

We talk about a new digital revolution. We talk about all the fruits that the Internet is bringing to us. But I am afraid that we are on a collision course between reregulation and this unregulated revolution that is doing so much good for so many people.

The Internet is growing at a staggering pace, one that we could not have imagined when we passed the Telecommunications Act of 1996. This astonishing growth creates an urgent need for high-speed Internet capacity at both the regional and the local level so that all Americans can participate in this new digital economy. With each announcement of yet another telecommunications merger, or as we say telecom merger, I become increasingly concerned about the concentration in the Internet backbone market, a mo-

napoly, a cartel. Today, the four largest backbone network providers control more than 85 percent of the Internet data traffic in this country, 85 percent.

Mr. Speaker, probably as a result of this, we are already hearing calls for regulating the Internet. If we do not act now, an Internet cartel may emerge that can dictate price and availability to consumers. Mr. Speaker, this is a much more attractive and desirable alternative to reregulation. The rules should be changed to allow all telecommunications companies to compete in the market. It makes no sense to keep the five of the most capable competitors, the regional bell operating companies, from building regional backbone networks to deliver the fruits of the digital economy to many more Americans.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all of my colleagues, all of my fellow Members to support competition in the Internet backbone market, and I encourage this body to act with the utmost speed. If we fail to act promptly, if we fail to assure competition, the alternative may sadly be the Internet regulation act of 2000.

THE ECONOMY, THE BUDGET, AND SOCIAL SECURITY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. KINGSTON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, I wanted to kind of review the events of the last year in terms of the budget situation that we are in with the House. As my colleagues know, the House convened in January and at that time, the President of the United States stood in that well and proposed that we spend 40 percent of the Social Security surplus. He said, I think we should only reserve 60 percent and dedicate the rest to a number of programs that he had outlined in his presentation.

Well, we on the Republican side and many of the Democrats said, you know what, Mr. President, we want to preserve 100 percent of Social Security. Because after all, if one is an employee in a factory and one works and one puts money aside in a retirement plan, when one retires, by law, that plan has to be there; that money has to be there for you. Only in the United States of America can we mix a retirement plan with operating expenses, and we call that Social Security, and it is wrong.

This time, things have been different. For the first time in modern history, the U.S. Congress has not spent one dime of Social Security on anything else but Social Security. It is very significant.

So now we are in this budget negotiation. The genesis of the budget agreement was 1997 and there was a bipartisan budget agreement. Democrat

Members, Republican Members, the White House, the Senate, the House, everybody signed off on a bipartisan agreement to get spending under control. I think as a result of that, partly, but mostly because of the strong economy, the budget has now become balanced. That is to say, we do not have a deficit, yet we still have a debt. We have a debt of \$5.4 trillion.

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That money, Mr. Speaker, has to be paid by our children if we do not do anything about it. So I do not think it is just good enough for us to pat ourselves on the back that we have eliminated the deficit. We have to go back and pay off the debt.

So right now we have this budget agreement in place, and that has been the guide for 13 different appropriation bills. Most of these have passed the House and the Senate, and they are at the White House. A few of them are going to be done in the next, probably 5 legislative days. Yet the President has already vetoed the foreign aid bill. He wants us to spend more money on foreign aid. So we say to the President and AL GORE, because the vice president is very much involved in this process, we say, Mr. GORE, Mr. Clinton, where do you want the money to come from for more foreign aid?

We do not think the House has the will to raise taxes and, indeed, yesterday by a vote of 419 to 0, Democrats joined Republicans in rejecting the Clinton-Gore tax package, 419 to 0. To increase taxes, that is not an option.

Spending Social Security, I think now the President has backed off spending the 40 percent of the Social Security surplus; and he has joined Republicans saying, okay, let us do what businesses do. Let us preserve 100 percent of it.

So if we are not going to get money out of Social Security, and we agree on that and we are not going to get money out of raising taxes, then where are you going to get the money, Mr. GORE and Mr. Clinton, to spend more money on foreign aid?

Now, I do not think we should spend more money on foreign aid. I think the foreign aid bill this year is one of the lowest bills we have had in many years. The taxpayers of America are fed up with foreign aid. I supported the package because it was a good reduction in foreign aid, but now Mr. GORE and Mr. Clinton want to raise it. We are saying, it cannot be gotten out of Social Security. It cannot be gotten out of taxes. The only thing that can be done is hold the line on spending, and we hope that they will join us in that effort.

Mr. JONES of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. KINGSTON. I yield to the gentleman from North Carolina.

Mr. JONES of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, when the gentleman was talking about foreign aid, it reminded me,